

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of electro discharge machining a passage through a work piece using a hollow electro discharge machining electrode and a corresponding flushing agent supplied via the hollow electrode wherein a discrete backing member is positioned abutting ~~the a~~ face of the work piece through which the electrode exits so that at break through of said electrode through said work piece the path of the flushing agent is not disrupted.

2. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the backing member positioned such that it forms a fluid tight seal with the work piece.

3. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the backing member comprises modelling clay.

4. (Previously Presented) A work piece which has been manufactured according to the method as described in claim 1.

5. (Original) A work piece produced according to claim 4 wherein the work piece is an aerospace component.

6. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for electro discharge machining a passage through a work piece comprising a hollow electro discharge machining electrode, a corresponding flushing agent supplied via the hollow electrode and a discrete backing member positioned abutting ~~the a~~ face of the work piece through which the electrode exits so that at break through of said electrode through said work piece the path of the flushing agent is not disrupted.

7. (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 6 wherein the backing member comprises modelling clay.

8. (Previously Presented) A method as claimed in claim 2 wherein the backing member comprises modelling clay.

9. (Previously Presented) A work piece which has been manufactured according to the method as described in claim 2.

10. (Previously Presented) A work piece which has been manufactured according to the method as described in claim 3.

11. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein the discrete backing member is positioned to span the entire breakthrough region on the face of the work piece through which the electrode exits.

12. (New) Apparatus as claimed in claim 6 wherein the discrete backing member is positioned to span the entire breakthrough region on the face of the work piece through which the electrode exits.